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Letter from Christopher Lasch to Linda Grace Hoyer, April 13, 1951

Christopher Lasch

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April 13, 1951

Dear Mrs. Updike,

This is a belated letter to thank you for your kindness in having me as a guest over the vacation. I had a wonderful time. I am afraid the visit spoiled me, and it was only with great difficulty that I re-entered the hectic swirl of Harvard life.

I was very much impressed by the countryside surrounding your farm, esthetically as well as geologically. It is beautiful country.

I was glad to have had the chance to read the novel, and I hope you finish it soon. The difficulties under which you are working are very great. Writing itself is often nothing more than very hard work, and one wonders if it is worth the effort. In the long run I think it is. Even if you don't sell it, you will be happy. I liked a great many parts of the book; the first chapter still stands out. I think you did a very good job with Juan's mother, and, for that matter, with the youthful Juan. I feel that I knew them both very well after reading only that first chapter. The main immediate danger, ~~seems to me~~ as you go ahead, seems to me to be leaving too much up to the reader, who is easily discouraged.

But I sense that both my criticism of the novel and my thanks for the visit are somehow inadequate. Give my best wishes to Mr. Updike, your parents, and the dogs. I hope you all have a good spring.

Sincerely,

W. L. Updike